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ABSTRACT

Interviews with 14 experienced educators on the current state of education in the United States are presented in this booklet. The experts discuss the current tasks facing educators, the need for redefining the teaching profession, and the importance of rethinking the area of educational finances. The conversations reflect concerns about recruiting and retaining talented teachers and point up the fact that teachers should have more leeway in deciding how to meet state standards for education. It is noted that more attention must be paid to the way schools are organized, that state actions should be avoided that add to an already bureaucratic quality in the schools, and that the quality of teacher education institutions must be improved. The booklet ends with a list of ideas, points of departure, and suggestions for improving schooling. (JD)

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As one said, the states merit two cheers for what they have accomplished to renew teaching. Well, we want to earn the third cheer, not for ourselves, but for what it can mean to our children.

These are not the only voices we should listen to. As you know, I have urged that we listen to teachers. We should also hear principals, members of the public and the business community that have shown a continued interest in the quality of schools. We should attend to the many national studies on teacher policy that are appearing this year. We should listen to our supporters, and to responsible critics. And one of the strengths of the Education Commission of the States is that we can share our own best ideas. It has never been more important for us to listen to each other.

The conversation reported in this book sustains my belief that we are on the edge of a second phase of teacher reform, one that builds upon and extends what we did earlier but brings in many new themes. For example, our friends tell us that we should be more careful in what we regulate about teaching. Set firm, clear standards for the results we expect, but let educators have more leeway in deciding how to meet the standards. They say that the kind of people we want in the classrooms just won't stay without that kind of professional responsibility.

They warn us that we must attend to the way schools are organized, and we should avoid state actions that add to an already bureaucratic quality in schooling.

They ask why we don't have great institutions of teacher education. I know many teacher educators are asking and trying to answer that question, and we should encourage their effort.

They tell us that the profession itself must take up the fight we began for higher professional standards.

There is an urgency in what they are saying, even for the states that have been the most active. We all know that the test of our efforts is not whether we get the reform bill passed but in the quality of the people we attract to teaching in the next five years.

The conversation ends with a list of suggestions. They are not recommendations of the sort we expect in the education reports. Rather, they are ideas, points of departure, the kind of useful suggestions that you get only from people who know that the work is hard, who believe in what you are trying to do and want you to succeed.

Tom Kean

Thomas H. Kean
Governor of New Jersey
Chairman, Education Commission
of the States, 1985–86

What Next? More Leverage for Teachers

WHAT NEXT? MORE LEVERAGE FOR TEACHERS

• • •

Edited by Joslyn Green

• • •

July 1986

Education Commission of the States
1860 Lincoln Street, Suite 300
Denver, Colorado 80295

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If we are ever going to make a dent in the problems we face in public education, we're going to have to find ways of permitting talented teachers to play a much larger role. We need to find ways of giving talented people, first-rate professionals, extra leverage.

• *Bernard Gifford*
Dean
Berkeley School of Education

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Other publications in the Teacher Renaissance series:

New Directions for State Teacher Policies (TR-85-1)
Listening to Teachers (TR-85-2)
Making Teachers Partners in Reform (TR-86-1)
Talking With Teachers (TR-86-2)
Talk With Us, Work With Us (TR-86-4)

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Robert Palaich, Richard Mills and Joslyn Green, a senior editor in the ECS Communications Department, spent a great deal of time thinking about questions. Susan Fuhrman assisted in that process. Richard Mills and Joslyn Green conducted all 14 interviews. Constance Oswald in the governor's office in New Jersey and Barbara Deard, JoAnne Wilkins and Anna Likens at ECS provided logistical support for setting up the interviews.

The final, and most important, task of pulling the 20 hours of conversation together into a clear statement for state policy makers fell to Joslyn Green. With secretarial assistance from Pamela Stimpson and Anna Likens, she cut through hundreds of pages of transcripts to produce this report. Marci Reser set the type and Elisbeth Brookfield provided the graphic design.

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These contributors, who are introduced more fully in the "Roll Call" section, were interviewed individually. Their transcribed remarks were grouped by theme, then woven together. They are "expert" in the sense that they are some of the thoughtful people who have spent much of their professional lives studying schools.

I think this is a unique time. I know of no other time in history when state leaders have been, on the whole, so deeply concerned about the nature and quality of the teaching profession.

• *Diane Ravitch*

A Unique Time • I

• • •

The experts agree: to the states goes the credit for leading the push for excellence in education in recent years. At a time when "educators abdicated their responsibility," as Phillip Schlechty puts it, governors and state legislators have adopted all sorts of new measures. Excellence has been the goal, but it may not be the result. Mixed with general admiration for the willingness of state leaders to act is general concern: some of the steps states have taken so far may lead in the wrong direction, and additional steps seem essential.

Boyer • "Two cheers for the states," I say. I don't mean that to be as tongue in cheek as it may sound, for I think state activity has been more vigorous and in some ways more hope-filled than activity in any other sector. If only in terms of intensity of effort, the record has been remarkable. I don't know of any other period in the nation's life when there has been so much activity in so many states on behalf of education in general and concern for teaching in particular.

This has been a political school reform movement, and I mean that in a benign sense. We have not had national leadership, and we have not had education leadership. The action has been at the state level; the actors have been governors and governors' commissions and legislatures. Because it's been motivated by the right spirit, I think we have to give it two cheers.

Porter • Over the last few years, governors have become increasingly active in educational improvement. I think that's been a wonderful thing, because we're all persuaded about what's important by other people. Education is big and complicated, really hard to move, so improving it will take everybody working together. To have governors concerned about education has been a major boost.

Schlechty • Educators can be critical of what state policy makers have done. But the fact is that there was no leadership in education until governors and legislators began to supply it. Educational leaders abdicated their responsibility and somebody had to do something. As I heard a superintendent in Georgia say, to criticize state leadership is to be kind of like the guy who shot his wife for kissing another man when he hadn't kissed her for 12 years.

Tucker • Led by governors, states are playing a leadership role that I consider absolutely critical; without them, nothing of any consequence would have happened. States have, I think, identified most of the arenas in which action has to be taken.

It is clear, for example, that states have begun to think seriously about raising the standards for entry into the profession. That's a momentous step. While one might have legitimate questions about the way it's being done, that it's being done at all is terribly important and lays the base for what we need to do in the future.

The states are clearly experimenting with a wide range of approaches to attracting people into teaching who might not otherwise come in. Some of those approaches are financial, and I think that's appropriate. There is, in effect, a national experiment going on with "loan forgiveness" programs, for example, as states show their willingness to subsidize the cost of education for students who agree to go into teaching. Our experience so far indicates that doing only that doesn't get you very far. But that's not to say that loan forgiveness programs, in combination with other powerful strategies, won't make a big difference.

One of the most visible things states are doing to attract teachers is raising salaries. Here again, I question whether the steps being taken are sufficient. But the fact is that many states are raising salaries by 8%, by 10%, by 16%, and doing this, many of them, in the face of deficits they have to correct by raising taxes or cutting other state programs. It might have been relatively painless to raise salaries in an era of fiscal surplus like we had a few years ago. But for most states this is not an era of surplus. So while I think the raises are insufficient, measured against a standard I'd like to lay out later, recognizing the efforts states are making to grant raises is very important.

Timpane • This year, for the first time in several years, we have seen enrollments rise in many of our basic teacher education programs. I think that shows a labor/supply response to the news that teaching is more important and may be a better professional and economic deal in the future than it is today.

I think that state policy has created these sorts of opportunities. Career ladders, new state support for pay structures, state incentives for school improvement programs, new state programs for the professional development of teachers and administrators are all opportunities. But state policy has also raised obstacles. Many people are saying states have picked a modality that may be counterproductive: regulating and mandating without relying enough on incentives.

We're just beginning to see some analysis of state actions, and I think it will uncover major new issues. Until very recently, teacher education was one of the great untouched areas. So were licensure, the whole nature of the certification and accreditation process, the undergraduate/graduate balance in teacher preparation, the financing of teacher preparation and the relationship between schools of education and local schools.

Tucker • To say that states are due a lot of credit for impressive leadership, especially but not exclusively the governors, is not to say that everything they have done is likely to solve the problems we face. I think that some state actions have had serious adverse consequences. Some actions have been ill-advised. In some cases, state actions in arenas other than explicit teaching policy have, I think, overwhelmed the positive effects of teaching policy.

Schlechty • Though I think public education would be in much worse shape without state intervention than it is with that intervention, a lot of the things states have done may not serve the purposes for which intervention was initiated.

Lieberman • I see two trends competing and maybe contradicting each other, a kind of heavy bureaucratization, and an interest in further professionalizing teaching. I'm struck by how less than powerful the incentives are, compared to the regulations.

Sykes • Other people are more inclined to optimism than I. But it really does seem to me as if those things that are most important to the daily work of teachers are simply beyond the reach of anything the states can do.

Darling-Hammond • When it comes to determining exactly how teaching will be conducted and schools will be managed, state policy makers are beyond the range of their real reach. They can pass mandates that will have some effects. But the effects may not be ones they intend, because the matters they're addressing are not easily prescribed from afar.

I do think that turning attention back to teachers and now increasingly to principals is healthy, because it acknowledges the importance of people in the process of education. The efforts to restructure teaching are in that sense probably constructive. On the other hand, I think state policy makers are mainly using regulation as the tool for restructuring teaching, which is inherently inconsistent with the goal of professionalizing teaching. Therein lies the challenge for the next few years, to the extent that the interest of the public and of policy makers remains focused on teachers and teaching.

Tucker • The critical question is whether state actions, to date, taken together, will do the trick. My answer? It is extremely unlikely that policies now in place or under wide discussion will be adequate, even close to adequate. So I think what we need, and what we'll end up having, is "Round Two."

Boyer • If we don't move on now to "Phase Two," we will lose a great opportunity.

• • •

I think we would be wrong to become romantic about the local school unrelated to some common goals and standards. I really do believe we are talking about a tension, a tension between some commonness of achievement and the vitality of initiative and independence. How can we avoid randomness on the one hand and rigidity on the other? That, to me, is the current task. I don't think the answer is simply to say, "Let's chuck it all and deregulate."

• *Ernest Boyer*

THE CURRENT TASK • II

"The teachers who are leaving are the good teachers, not the weak ones," points out Ann Lieberman. That's not the only problem the experts see with state education reform to date. But it is symptomatic. That is, if the net effect of policies to reform teaching, however well intentioned, drives out good teachers, for example, then those policies are simply not practical. What worries the experts is that current policies won't work, judged not against some grand theory but against the realities of public education.

Here are some of their major concerns.

• ***Policy that fails to consider the human side of institutions won't work.***

As Ernest Boyer puts it, "I'm not being sentimental. I'm saying that what makes an organization work is empowering the people who do the work."

• ***Centralizing what cannot be centralized won't work. Neither will decentralizing what cannot be decentralized.***

What policy makers must do now is to sort out which aspects of education can be centralized and which cannot. Absent from the discussion is what Gary Sykes calls the "rhetoric of the 1970s," which overestimated the value of dispersing initiative to individual schools, school boards, communities, parent groups. "It is powerful, persuasive rhetoric," he points out; but "instead of this tremendous release of creative energy nothing much happened at all." A less dogmatic but more complicated notion has taken its place: both central authority and dispersed authority are essential. In these terms, state policy makers need to assume some responsibilities as well as to delegate some others.

• • •

• ***Being too specific won't work.***

"Regulation," says Sykes, "begets regulation avoiding behavior." The experts do not argue for wholesale deregulation. They do argue for more pragmatic decisions about when and how state policy should be specific. "Use regulation as a floor and not as a ceiling," suggests Sara Lightfoot, for example. Since schools for poor kids are very different from schools for upper middle class kids, she maintains, states do need to establish "the criteria for a decent education." But, she continues, "Unless there are some freedoms within teaching you will attract not creative, bright and energetic people but more passive types who depend on bureaucracy to provide a lifetime of relatively low-risk work."

• ***Piecemeal policy won't work.***

Particularly difficult for policy makers, but essential, is integrating policies. Otherwise state policy is apt to be insufficient or counterproductive. "If you're running a business and performance is down, you start asking yourself what's wrong, if you're a good manager, not who's to blame," points out Phillip Schlechty. "But in education, we tend to look around for who's to blame rather than at what's hurting." Under ordinary circumstances, linking policies to train teachers better with policies to improve the conditions in which teachers work makes sense, so that good teachers have solid opportunities to do good work. But, argue Marc Tucker and others, circumstances are fast becoming extraordinary. Tucker considers this the "pivot year," when the supply of qualified teachers roughly balances the demand. Approaching fast is a "crisis of quality," he thinks, of a magnitude that may make broad restructuring more feasible than incremental reform.

In general, the experts seem to be suggesting that political leaders take a new and more realistic look at how policies affect people. They suggest that political leaders recognize that some events in education are beyond the direct reach of state policy. They suggest that guarding against the worst may produce policies that inhibit the best.

In short, they suggest a shift in attitude that would restructure the search for excellence in education. Only if that shift takes place will education be assured of what Marc Tucker terms "its fair share of talent" in what promises to be stiff competition for capable professionals.

Making that shift is, in essence, the current task.

POLICY THAT FAILS TO CONSIDER THE HUMAN SIDE OF INSTITUTIONS WON'T WORK

Boyer • Although dealing with people one-to-one is the particular skill of political leaders, they don't quite see the people side of the institutions for which they are responsible. There is this eternal tension in America between local control and state results (or even national

results, witness the almost mesmerized fascination with SAT scores). States have been trying to mediate that tension by using what they know best and can carry out most comfortably: regulation. But to merit a third cheer, states need to recognize that education is, in the end, a human enterprise. Excellence or productivity cannot be regulated; they depend instead on the attitudes of the people who do the work.

So far, the reform movement has just washed over most teachers. There has been very little to suggest that teachers are important. Now, I don't think you can touch every teacher. But I think it is possible, by symbol, to say to teachers, "You matter very much." That has not been part of the language or the strategy.

Most teachers know they're working toward some larger ends. They're not saying, "Let me teach anything I want." To me, that's a caricature of the problem. So, I'm all for larger ends, for having some visions that go beyond the classroom. But I'm also deeply convinced that the people in schools have to be able to get up with some excitement in the morning and feel they have a little bit of leverage.

Lieberman • There's a kind of band wagon effect of "hard-nose" — "Push 'em around, show 'em we mean business" — that I think has hurt teaching. We cannot deny the symbolic nature of state mandates. The message to teachers is that they are no good, not that they are people with potential who can grow and change.

Because teachers and good school people have not, for the most part, been involved in the discussion, they see reform as remediation. They have had no opportunity to say "Yes, this is right; we need to do this." So they feel they are being done to.

Ravitch • I guess that if I were to give one overall critique I'd point out that a lot of states (though there are some stellar exceptions) have shaped policy without involving teachers. You can't say, "We're going to impose teacher decision-making," without involving teachers in some discussions.

Boyer • I keep looking for those signals, those symbols, that say to teachers, "It's going to be through your efforts that this job is done. We're going to put not just words but resources behind that strategy."

Shulman • Since states supply the money for education, state leaders tend to feel they have an obligation to dictate precisely how the money is spent. So do parents who support their children through adolescence and beyond. But in both cases I think the real and very hard obligation is the obligation to fund independence.

CENTRALIZING WHAT CANNOT BE CENTRALIZED WON'T WORK. NEITHER WILL DECENTRALIZING WHAT CANNOT BE DECENTRALIZED

Schlechty • I'm not arguing against a central push. I think a central push is needed all the time. But what should be centralized and what should be decentralized is probably the most critical policy question that legislators are confronting — and will confront.

It seems to me that there are three categories: things that can't be centralized no matter what you do, things that can't be decentralized no matter what you do, and things about which there is choice. I think legislators need to sort those things out.

Personnel evaluation cannot be centralized, for example, and energy spent trying to centralize it is just energy wasted. You can get a charade of a centralized evaluation system, you can get paper compliance, you can get all kinds of bureaucracy built up to monitor, monitor, monitor. But you're never going to take away personnel evaluation in its meaningful sense from the lowest-level operating unit. It doesn't happen at IBM, it doesn't happen at AT&T, and it's not going to happen in the states. I do think states can set up standards for local evaluations, and I think they can evaluate evaluations. But I don't think they can evaluate personnel. States have to look at evaluation as a technical, legal task. But if evaluation is going to be effective in getting people to do a particular piece of work and do it well, it has to be seen as a moral and political task.

As for things that cannot be decentralized, no matter what you do — no local unit can establish state priorities and state goals. You can do all you want at town meetings and so forth. You can get a lot of input. But, in the end, someone's got to bell the cat. I think one of the reasons some of the southeastern states have been more successful than some others is that the governors know what their education business is about. They've said, basically, "Why do we want to educate kids? Because we want to improve our economy." Instead of looking to state education agencies, as we do now, to provide technical assistance, to provide programs, to monitor programs, we ought to be enhance their capacity to establish — with legislative input — priorities for the state.

How much discretion you give people over fiscal resources is, I think, an example of the sort of thing that can be centralized or decentralized. You've got some choice.

Let's take the business of staff development. Chapter I, which was centralized in Washington, makes a good illustration. The decision was that money for staff development had to be targeted at Chapter I teachers. The logic of that makes all kinds of sense. But, since there's considerable research to show that effective staff development takes place among people who are interdependent, it might have been better to say, "This money must be used to support Chapter I goals. You must document how it was used, and you must be accountable for how it was used." Then the money could have been spent on staff development for a Chapter I teacher in one instance and on team building around a Chapter I teacher in another instance.

I'm for centralized troublemaking and decentralized problem-solving. Establish central goals. Let school systems know how they are doing in meeting those goals. Help systems that aren't meeting the goals or don't have the resources. But that requires a kind of honest feedback system that isn't very typical at this point.

Right now, I think states are spending an awful lot of energy centralizing some things that can't be centralized.

Shulman • States do have the obligation to hold schools accountable to a set of standards. But accountability is possible without those standards being the same across all schools. To be accountable and to be responsible is not the same as to be the same.

Lieberman • There is a kind of assumption that just because you say something across the board it will happen across the board. Yet you know very well it doesn't — not in other areas of life and not in schools, where the variations in social relations are endless. I don't think a lot of state people understand that point.

Sizer • I now spend much of my time with people in schools who are being allowed to try new things. So the voices I listen to are disproportionately voices of people on the move. But what I hear are calls for vigorous support of the difficult efforts these people are making to rearrange how kids and teachers spend their time — to reach exactly the same quite traditional ends that have been the object of the reform movement. They agree with states on goals, that is, but profoundly disagree with some of the ways states are insisting on reaching those goals.

Boyer • I'd like to see a balance of regulation and renewing. I don't want deregulation in education any more than I want the airlines so deregulated there's no one in the control tower saying, "It's your turn on the runway." When it's a rainy day at Newark, I want regulation.

We live in a society where interests interlock. Where relationships intersect, you yield your individual interest toward some larger good. So, I don't think we should abolish regulation, accountability or common goals. But 9 times out of 10 this is all we think about when it comes to school reform. I'd be willing to settle for 60:40 or 70:30. But right now it's 95:5.

For the next few years, I'd like to see governors and legislators talk not about constraining and controlling but about creating and renewing.

Porter • I was talking with another professor about the research I've been doing to find out how elementary mathematics teachers make decisions about content. "Great work, Andy," he says. "You've described some interesting things about how teachers decide what to teach. But most of it doesn't relate at all to what I think *ought* to be taught." Well, I don't think letting school districts operate in a vacuum with their own policies, procedures

and practices is going to make a dent in that problem. Chances are the states are a better bet. If you're not going to teach everything — and that's a given — what are you going to teach? I think most teaching, most curriculum guides, most tests all operate on the wrong level of detail; they're too micro.

What I'm trying to do is illustrate that there are goals of teaching that need some serious attention. Setting the goals of schooling represents a very serious challenge to policy makers, who may inadvertently put in place policies that don't relate very well.

Ten to 15 years from now, I'd like us not to let a single student opt out of a serious mathematics curriculum without any inkling of the implications of that decision.

Ravitch • I recently went to Japan for a week with a group from the U.S. Department of Education. I was very impressed with what I guess the political analysts would call "loose-tight coupling." The curriculum in Japan is in a sense prescriptive, but teachers are given a great deal of freedom in terms of how to teach. In this country, we leave a lot of flexibility in the curriculum, but then we tie people's hands in other ways. We end up with something like curricular chaos and at the same time regulate whether teachers can turn around and use the telephone.

So I think legislatures have in some places overstepped their bounds. I know that some states have prescribed the number of minutes subjects are to be taught. I think that's foolish. You can't say you're going to create a profession and then give teachers no leeway in how to allocate time.

Darling-Hammond • To say that it is useful and appropriate for states to make certain kinds of education policy is not to say that other types of policy are not better determined at other levels. It is absolutely essential for states to tend to school finance, for example, and to matters of equity. On the other hand, I would say that tending to technical decisions about the process of education is far less useful for state policy makers, because the reach of state policy is not long enough to make good and appropriate actions take place in that area. State policies can't be fine-grained. They have to be uniform, and it must be possible to implement them through layers of bureaucracy. They're most useful for proscribing bad behavior so to speak — for making sure that harm does not occur to a large number of people. But they're least useful for making sure that good occurs for individuals, for individual teachers and students. It's very difficult for states to mandate that good things occur in classrooms.

BEING TOO SPECIFIC WON'T WORK

Graham • I'm very concerned about the specificity of many of the state requirements that affect teaching. I think it would be much wiser for states to have what seems, from my point of view, a more pragmatic approach: less fancy rules, observed for longer periods of time. If the state could put all its regulations about teachers on one page, that would be a great advance in the scheme of things. Then, it might be possible to say, when the crunch comes — when there is a teacher shortage, for example — that the rules still matter.

Ravitch • Some of the states that I visited last year were creating new categories, licensing people to teach only in the first three grades, say, or only in grades 3–6. I think that's counterproductive. Teachers ought to be able to change jobs and areas as long as they're prepared. I don't see the purpose of tying people down.

Sykes • When the state specifies everything in regulations, down to dotting i's and crossing t's, it creates a culture of apathy and despair at the local level. Built into the system then is an excuse not to be creative, energetic, problem-seeking. I'm much more impressed with states that use assistance strategies — that tend to be leery of regulating technical matters for which there is no reasonable knowledge base — than states that try to specify everything right out of the legislature.

Sizer • There's a lot of arrogance in the current regulatory mood. I think a sense of humility should come back into state discussions of education. I'd like state people to say, "What we're doing seems not to be as helpful as it might be. So, let's have open minds for a while and see if we can't do better."

Porter • Laying down standards and judging whether people meet them is an awful lot easier than somehow ensuring that people reach the standards we think are important.

Lightfoot • There are some benign reasons why people are looking for quick remedies: in too many schools across the country, too many students (particularly poor kids) are graduating illiterate. But there are a whole lot of people for whom the press to get "back to basics" is a press to make education less interesting and much less creative. The result can be a view of education that is distorted and narrow. In some sense, "back to basics" is a myopic response to the really difficult cultural dilemma we face. I can only hope that policy makers won't be seduced into responding to constituents with the kind of quick solution that is ultimately debilitating for education.

Porter • My sense is that it's good for states to supply intellectual leadership in education and undertake enabling sorts of activities to help districts and schools and teachers become more effective. I prefer a softer approach, not saying, "This is what you do, and this is how you do it."

Lieberman • The more states set narrow objectives (so many hours per day of reading or testing minimum competence or intruding into curricular areas in specific kinds of ways), the fewer the opportunities for teachers to help other teachers develop. I think we have not even touched the possibilities for real autonomy.

Lightfoot • Some teachers — the ones who have been encouraged to be relatively passive as curriculum creators, relatively ordinary as pedagogues and relatively unimaginative — feel somewhat threatened by the idea of more autonomy. More autonomy would mean, as many teachers tell me, more work and more responsibility. That's the dialectic: with more power comes more responsibility. So I think policy makers will hear from some teachers that the highly regulated bureaucratic approach is a good one. But the teachers we would hope to attract into teaching — the ones who view it as a professional endeavor requiring choice, autonomy, responsibility, risk — will, in fact, not welcome regulation.

Shulman • I want to talk about the incompleteness of state policy. I'm excited about the possibilities of raising standards for teachers. Raising standards for the curriculum is also very enticing. But if state policy makers for one moment think that raising standards per se is going to bring the revolution, they're out of their minds. Once the people who meet those higher standards move into classrooms they'll get the heck out — unless they've taken the vow of masochism. These are people with alternatives.

There is a sense here in California (and I assume that other states are like this, too) that by waving a magic wand and requiring four years of English, two years of science and three years of mathematics (or whatever), you've raised standards. But what does it cost, in human terms and in terms of materials, to create the conditions for teaching a third year of mathematics to kids who for the last decade or two have never studied it?

Let's say that someone decided that the reason there were so many road accidents was because there were too many blowouts. So we raised the standards for the materials that go into tires and the quality standards for Firestone and Goodyear. But at the same time we allowed the highways to become so deeply potholed that you'd have to be driving a Sherman tank to avoid blowouts. That's an incomplete policy.

Regulations like those in California's SBA 13 are really shells. They're empty right now. What does "four years of English" really mean? Policy makers don't like to deal with that, I find, and they don't continue investing resources in energy in helping people do a responsible, inventive job of working within guidelines.

Boyer • I don't put a lot of stock in simple code words like "deregulate." Unless we talk about ends more carefully we're going to get randomness, then frustration, then backlash. We're always concerned with the mechanistic aspects of reform, not the substantive ones. Regulation or deregulation is only a means to some larger end, as yet undefined.

Piecemeal Policy Won't Work

Schlechty • There needs to be a *comprehensive* policy-making structure instead of piecemeal structures. For example, we talk about mentor programs or internships or evaluation or training teachers. Law gets made in each of those areas, with little attention to effects on any of the other areas. (Each law may, in fact, go through a different committee in the legislature.) Though a piece of legislation may make sense in its own right, it may offset another piece of legislation that also makes sense in its own right.

I know that legislators and governors are elected for short periods of time. They want legislation that will have measurable results in their tenure. I understand that. But it took 150 years to get education in the mess that it's in, and we're not going to untangle that mess in this legislator's term or that governor's. I don't blame legislators for wanting short-term solutions. But I think there's a lack of long-term vision.

Tucker • Because of demographic pressures, we face what could reasonably be called, without hyperbole, a crisis with respect to the quality of teachers. We do not face a teacher shortage. There isn't now and never has been a shortage of teachers in the United States; we always fill our classrooms. The crisis arises not because of a shortage but because at the very time when we must substantially improve teaching we face an enormous increase in demand for teachers — and a growing recognition that the education of American students must improve if we are not to be in severe economic trouble.

My view is that we cannot even begin to address the problem we really face without considering radical change in the structure of institutions.

Let me just take salaries as an example. We're now seeing salary increases for teachers of as much as 16%. That's very encouraging. What we tend to forget is that the increases over the course of the last couple of years follow a steady 10-year decline in the real wages of teachers. In those terms, salaries are not yet back to where they were ten years ago. Why is that important? It's important because in that same 10 years opportunities have become available, particularly to women but also to talented people from minority groups, to enter the mainstream of American professional life. The vast, talented labor pool that we have relied on decade in and decade out to staff schools isn't there anymore — and it's not going to be there anymore. So, any notions that the ordinary workings of supply and demand will return us to some stability we enjoyed earlier are simply wrong.

That being the case, we have to ask ourselves — really for the first time since schools took their modern form shortly after the turn of the century — what getting talented people into schools will take if we must offer them *competitive* wages and working conditions. We've never had to ask that question before.

Let's follow the problem of pay out to its end. To provide competitive salaries and benefits to teachers would, I estimate, produce an incremental cost of $23–$50 billion. But, in fact, that's an underestimate, since we want people of significantly higher ability than are now entering teaching. We will have to find them among the smaller numbers of people now going to college, even as our competitors for talent, the military and business and government, raise the wages they're willing to pay.

When you've done all the analysis it's striking how simple the basic challenge is: we have to find a way to improve greatly the performance of schools and teachers without a commensurate increase in cost. What we have is a formidable problem in productivity.

If we meet the challenge, it won't be by incremental changes. It will be by radical change in structure. It may even be that we've reached a point where radical change will be easier than incremental change. That sort of thing happens in history when prevailing arrangements gridlock. Anger with gridlock rises to the point that many people who might not otherwise do so are prepared to entertain what earlier looked like radical notions.

I think that's where we are now in education, to a degree that most people don't realize. Though governors and legislators have shown great courage in getting raises for teachers, what we've seen so far doesn't lay a glove on the problem.

Shulman • I commented earlier on the incompleteness of state policy so far and on the impracticality of standard setting alone. Here's one missing piece: what are the minimum acceptable conditions in school organizations that are likely to hold well qualified people? I think the national groups that are carefully considering the conditions of teaching are on the right track. Standards and conditions must be looked at together.

To say we need a "seamless web" of policy is just a glib cliche. But we do need to solve a damn complicated problem.

Darling-Hammond • If you define shortages in terms of teachers' qualifications, there are already and will continue to be important shortages. I'm concerned, further, about our tendency to define shortages in terms of total supply and demand, when what's really important is whether enough people have the particular qualifications to fill particular vacancies. Even with virtual equilibrium in overall supply and demand, you can have acute shortages in some fields and in the school districts that always have a hard time getting teachers. The biggest impact of shortages now is on urban and poor rural school districts, and that will continue to be true.

What concerns me is the possibility of repeating our experience in the 1960s. With the shortages of teachers that arose came salary hikes, which then eroded over the next decade. We had incentives for entering teaching, which disappeared; we had career ladders and merit pay plans proposed across the country, but the real gains were very few.

Then, as now, state and local policy makers seemed to have a sort of schizophrenic feeling about teacher supply and quality. How much did they want to raise the status and pay of teachers and change the structures for teaching? Or did they really want to do what was minimally necessary to staff classrooms with virtually anyone? People talked then about the "feather test": if the feather wiggled when someone held it in front of your nose, you were hired.

We're doing the same thing now — raising standards on the one hand and then creating loopholes that allow virtually anyone to teach on the other. To the extent that we are willing to fill vacancies with unqualified or underqualified people, we won't realize a lot of gains from this whole reform movement.

Tucker • My impression is that the governors I know most about now recognize some of the shortcomings of the schemes they first advocated. While having no regrets about having advocated those schemes, they are now prepared, I think, to take next steps. Their attraction to the issues in education was not casual in the first place; it was occasioned by, more than anything else, a pretty sophisticated appraisal of state economic prospects. That appraisal hasn't changed, which leads me to believe that state policy makers are not likely to walk away from education issues very fast.

These are pretty shrewd people. When they realize how the increased slope of demand threatens the improvements they've already made, they're going to redouble their efforts. This is not going to be a problem you can hide.

I can't predict what will happen next. But I am hopeful that enough people — enough serious-minded legislators, scholars and policy influencers — are puzzling over these questions sufficiently that we will, in fact, see significant breakthroughs in redefining the teaching profession and the act of teaching.

• *Linda Darling-Hammond*

REDEFINING THE TEACHING PROFESSION • III

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Restructuring how teachers learn to be teachers, altering the conditions in which teachers work and making teaching more like a profession are, say the experts, three powerful possibilities for resolving the "crisis in quality" that Marc Tucker describes.

Exploiting those possibilities is no easy matter.

- Their potential will be most apparent to policy makers who are prepared for the shift in attitude described in the previous section. Yet for many reasons — the exigencies of the political process, the clamor of special interests, inertia and the sheer size of the education enterprise — making that shift could prove difficult.

- What's the chicken, what's the egg, which comes first? If, for example, one good way to improve working conditions is to give teachers a greater measure of autonomy, are the teachers trained by the current system capable of handling that autonomy? On the other hand, waiting to change working conditions until teachers have been trained in new ways also has major disadvantages: highly capable, ambitious new teachers are especially unlikely to tolerate current working conditions. As Phillip Schlechty points out, "If we reformed teacher education every way we could imagine, that wouldn't make much difference in the way schools are organized. Having delivery systems in universities isn't enough; you've also got to have reception systems in schools."

- Collaboration, however cumbersome at times, is essential. As Gary Sykes reminds us, "The politics of education involve a number of constituent groups who have the power to veto change but do not have the power to produce change."

Still, the current of hope runs strong. To be realistic about difficulties makes sense, the experts concur. But so does being realistic about the promise of possibilities like those they discuss here.

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POSSIBILITY 1 • DO A BETTER JOB OF TRAINING BETTER TEACHERS

One approach, suggests Bernard Gifford, is to build great schools of education. (Sykes, Graham, Lightfoot, Shulman and Timpane concur, complementing Gifford's ideas with some of their own.) What is taught in schools of education should change, they suggest, and the needs of several new types of students should be accommodated.

Another approach is, as Phillip Schlechty says, to "quit confusing teacher education with teachers' colleges."

Gifford • First-rate schools of education are absolutely essential to long-term educational reform.

I share some of the anger that many people have about schools of education. But I've concluded that the solution is to build some great schools of education. Instead of spending our time criticizing, let's set up some expectations and try to build schools that can meet those expectations.

In an ideal world, the history department at Berkeley, or at any other major university in the country, would be greatly concerned about perpetuating its culture. It would be concerned about how well high schools are teaching American and world history. In fact, given the governing ethos of major academic departments at the University of California and elsewhere, that simply is not going to happen. But — a first-rate school of education, one that is competent, can serve as a coupling agent between the disciplines and elementary/secondary education. It can force discussion of the process of knowledge transmission.

I do not believe that a school of education ought to be a mini-university that replicates every academic discipline. It ought instead to connect knowledge acquisition, which is the major role of the university, with knowledge transmission, which is its own major role. If we spend all our time transmitting knowledge and no time acquiring it, we eventually deplete our intellectual capital. But if, on the other hand, we spend all our time accumulating knowledge, never worrying about how that knowledge is going to be passed from one generation to the next, we build libraries while society decays.

Shulman • One thing I've proposed to a group of teacher education institutions is that, instead of trying to define one common concept of minimally acceptable teaching, they consider that impossible in principle. They could define teaching *excellence* in some broad sense, though. Then different institutions could say, "This institution will carve out this part of teaching excellence. To be accountable in a regulatory sense, it will demonstrate that it can do that extraordinarily well with all its graduates, say at the end of four or five years." I think that law schools and schools of architecture have already taken this approach, though it isn't formalized.

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Timpane • At Columbia Teachers College, we now sense new interest among the better and brighter young people, which I consider a heartening sign that the system for preparing teachers can bounce back. I think, though, that every college and university now has to figure out at least two things.

Every supplying institution, if you will, must have some particular character. We must use this opportunity to build strengths. Each institution needs to understand what it does well and doesn't do well, so that the overall system of teacher education is differentiated.

The other thing is to come to grips with what the country is going to require of teachers in the future. If we are going to have different pay systems, different career structures, different methods of school improvement, different ideas of how teachers function in schools, programs to prepare teachers need to take those outside requirements into account. I don't think they do that yet, at least not in any systematic sense. No one has set out to think about programs that way.

Sykes • I'd be inclined to say that we need a great deal more innovation and energy in teaching education. It has been a resource-starved enterprise, to be sure, its low reputation in some ways deserved and in others perfectly understandable. But efforts to regulate the enterprise do not speak to the problem, and they do provide teacher educators with one more excuse. I would prefer to strip away regulation and then give schools of education a grace period. Give them a challenge, then give them room to do something.

Timpane • As for what ought to be taught, my response is fairly conservative at this point. A good liberal arts education remains the best first approximation we have of how to create those habits of mind and behavior teachers must develop — respect for knowledge and understanding of breadth and complexity.

Nor am I ready to end a very substantial continuing reliance on the traditional disciplines. It took mankind a long time to figure out those methodologies and perspectives called mathematics, science, history, literature. So I don't think our task is to get rid of them or invent alternatives, but simply to discover how to give them greater contemporary salience.

Ravitch • I would see essentially abolishing undergraduate departments of education. We don't see undergraduate colleges of medicine; we don't see undergraduate colleges of law. If teaching is to be a profession with any kind of equivalency to other professions, then I think we have to move training to the graduate level. What we're doing now is permitting people to use undergraduate education courses to crowd out the real education they should be getting.

Porter • To take one group of teachers I know quite a lot about, elementary school mathematics teachers: there's a pretty serious lack of knowledge of subject matter. Here's an example. Just about everybody teaches the concept of "place value" at least a little bit in elementary school. Yet something like 60% of the prospective teachers in Michigan who had finished their training programs in mathematics could not correctly divide 24 by .3.

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Ravitch • My own view is that teachers ought to be among the best educated members of the community. When they are not, it's difficult to say that the public should have more respect for them. To begin to change the perception that the people in teacher education for the last 20 years or so were at the bottom of the barrel in many states, you have to change the reality. The Holmes Group and the California Commission have said, and I agree, that teachers ought to have a B.A. in a subject — a liberal arts degree in, for example, science or history or English or mathematics — and then get their professional training in a fifth year.

The bottom line is that we want our teachers well educated. Yet that, unfortunately, is not the case in many places.

Gifford • I, too, would abolish the undergraduate degree in education. I think further that education is too important to relegate to institutions that do not have a research mission.

Shulman • When people say that raising standards will raise the cost of being a teacher and therefore dissuade people from going into teaching, I think they confuse the interesting circularity and ambiguity of the relationship between cost and value. That is, I find that people are often prepared to pay more to get something with greater imputed value.

Graham • We continue to think of new teachers as being recent college graduates. That's certainly one population to think about. But the one thing we know about the changing demography of America is that people change jobs. For many of us, planning at age 21 for something we're going to do the rest of our lives has absolutely no validity. In teaching, maybe even more than in many other fields, we ought to be picking up people in midlife or in late career.

Here at Harvard, we have three teacher training programs. One is for undergraduates at Harvard College. We give them three education courses, including student teaching, and send them off to teach with provisional certification saying, "If you want to be permanently certified, you'll have to do more later." The intention is to pick up on very bright undergraduates who are not prepared to say they came to Harvard to become school teachers, but some of whom may find out that teaching is what really interests them. Another program, which is brand new, is for graduates of liberal arts colleges. We give them a year's training here and a Master's degree, then send them off into the schools. We are looking for people with a commitment to kids and a deep interest in — a passion for — some subject. Say someone's passionate about Tolstoy. We offer a course in Russian history and one in Russian literature, say, and ask, "How is this going to help you teach the novel or Tolstoy to 11th graders? How can you develop curriculum materials and pedagogical skills around your particular passion?" The third program — now in its third year and very successful — is for "mid-career" people anywhere from 30 to 60 years old who have earned their living doing something with mathematics or science and want to switch into teaching.

Lightfoot • These are people who have made their mark and, most of them, substantial salaries in industry as engineers or chemists or physicists. They know their disciplines and now it's a matter of learning to teach. They come with extraordinary energy and optimism as well as confidence about subject matter.

It strikes me that what has been called "the one-career imperative" that's abroad in our country may not be the way to think about careers in general — not a lawyer's career or a doctor's career or a teacher's career. To have people coming in to teach for five or six years, then going on to do other things, then maybe returning, is not such a bad thing.

Graham • The transition year is the tough one for people who make a mid-career switch into teaching. Most of them have figured out how to live on a teacher's salary. But they haven't figured out how to go without a salary for a year *and* pay tuition. The trick could be for states to offer loans. But current loan policies are generally premised on the notion that it's a young person who's going to school and who, unlike older people, is willing to take on debt.

There is the general sense, which is picked out by Bellah in *Habits of the Heart*, that modern America is searching for some way to express the need for all of us to have moral commitments and social responsibility. That's where the great opportunities for education are — in tapping that unfilled need of many Americans to do something socially useful.

Schlechty • I do think the university has something to offer in education. But I think the professional training of teachers occurs in the clinic — in classrooms. Instead of teacher educators being low-status college professors, they need to be high-status teachers.

I think we really have to start saying, "How do we invent organizations that are much more like teaching hospitals?" We need to begin to understand that the people who transmit the norms of a profession must be full-fledged members of that profession.

My concern is that we spend a lot of time flailing away at teachers' colleges and never touch teacher education. If we have reformed teacher colleges, we still may not have touched teacher education, because where teachers learn to teach is in schools. Doing away with teachers' colleges on the grounds that they're magnificently ineffective might make somebody feel good. But it wouldn't solve the problem with teacher education.

Ravitch • I would like to see more training of teachers shift to the schools. That means less emphasis on schools of education, more emphasis on supervising teachers in schools. It means more stress on mentoring, which in turn involves recognizing that knowledge can pass from practitioner to practitioner, from the old to the young.

I think there should be much closer collaboration than there has been between schools of education, whether undergraduate or graduate, and the schools they serve.

Schlechty • "The reform of teacher education" is a nice, politically attractive thing to talk about, because it seems that if you've got better quality teachers, you'll get better quality schools. But I think that's got the equation in reverse. The truth is that if you've got better quality schools, you'll get better quality teaching.

POSSIBILITY 2 • IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS FOR TEACHERS

By "working conditions," the experts mean far more than the physical environment of schools or even easily quantified, tangible conditions like teaching load or class sizes. They mean, instead, all the aspects of schools as organizations that affect a teacher's work. They agree that too many of the conditions now current in schools limit what teachers can do, rather than amplifying teachers' abilities.

Lieberman • Successful businesses are not run the way state legislatures are now attempting to run schools.

Porter • You cannot get meaningful teacher participation in schools the way they're structured right now. Yet teachers know the business, they understand the constraints, and they ought to be involved in their own futures.

Sizer • For me, the central issue is the conditions of work for teachers. If conditions make it impossible for good people to succeed, they're not going to go into teaching or stay in it.

Tucker • When you look at how teaching is organized — the conditions in which teachers work — you find a heavily feminized occupation in which people other than teachers are supposed to make all the important decisions about how services are rendered to clients.

Think about architects' offices, lawyers' offices, doctors' offices. Who's in charge? The architects, the lawyers, the doctors. The people licensed to practice in those fields by the state run the enterprise. They decide what services to render and how to render them. They hold themselves — or are meant to do so — to a high professional standard, ethically and technically, and they provide for their own continuing education. They hire people to manage their firms. They don't report to the people they hire; the people they hire report to them.

Contrast all of that with what happens in schools. Nobody reports to the teacher. The teacher reports to everyone else. Other people decide almost everything — how the day is organized, how students are assigned, what the curriculum will be, what is the day-to-day scope and sequence of instruction, how discipline is meted out. The schools operate in an incredibly bureaucratic culture, at the bottom of which we find the teacher. That makes schools very unattractive to many people with real intellectual skills and the desire for some control over themselves and their environment.

We are, in essence, shutting out of teaching the people we most desperately need to be teachers by the most basic attributes of the organizational environment.

We have to imagine, I think, what would happen if schools started to look more like architectural firms, legal firms and so on. What if the most capable and experienced teachers took major responsibility for running a school — organizing the work of the people who perform teaching and nonteaching functions and assuming many of the dubious responsibilities of people who work in the central office? Teachers might in some instances actually run schools, as do headmasters who teach. But they would in any event play major roles in hiring, evaluating, assigning students, developing curriculum, organizing the school day, and so on.

If we were able to set up schools that looked like that, it is at least plausible that we could save some of the money now spent on school administration. Differentiating the teachers who manage from those who don't would provide a sound basis for differentiating salaries, enabling us to make the best use of our fair share of the most talented people in the country.

That would represent an enormous departure in all important respects from the way schools are now organized.

Ravitch • The organization of schools has evolved pretty much along the lines of a factory: administrators are like factory supervisors and teachers are like factory workers. That arrangement may have been functional in an earlier time. But today, given the changes in society that have produced many other opportunities for educated people to work in far more pleasant environments, I don't think we can continue to attract able people with those sorts of working conditions.

Compare teaching in schools to teaching in college. The pay isn't all that different, but the working conditions certainly are. College faculty have a great deal of control over their own time and almost total control over how they teach. They don't have supervisors looking over their shoulders all the time. They do have a tremendous amount of freedom and flexibility.

Shulman • Many of the conditions of teaching, such as assigning 170 kids to one high school English teacher are, I would argue, unacceptable.

If the fire marshal or the health inspector told a school superintendent that a building was unsafe, the superintendent would feel obligated to do something. Some conditions are not tolerated. You don't let a building burn because of the cost of putting it out or anything else. You put it out.

If we had a "Board of Pedagogical Health" that was dominated by members of the teaching profession, just as the Board of Health is dominated by physicians, it could come up with some tradeoffs. How much of a reduction in load would a teacher be prepared to trade off for smaller increases in salary or fringe benefits or 12-month years? Different groups of teachers might make different decisions. Some might say, "We think we could live very well with a much smaller district office with no principals." Or, "We think we could live best with head teachers who operate like medical chiefs of staff."

I want members of the teaching profession to sit down with policy makers to help make these choices. But I do have strong reason to believe that aspects of class size and load size would be at the top of their list.

Graham • Current working conditions are a deterrent to good teaching. They discourage able people from staying. What is, in fact, a very good job, in terms of responsibility, for someone fresh out of college becomes a much less good job 15 years later because the conditions of work have not changed. Most of us don't like to do the same thing year in and year out, and the autonomy that's great for a 22-year-old new teacher can, where teachers lack collaborative or intellectual activity, cause serious isolation.

The hard work of teaching is emotionally and physically draining. Particularly damaging is the fact that teachers who have taught for a while learn to "cope" with a class, an accommodation that working conditions encourage. Coping means you don't make the extra effort that is necessary to reach out to children who are not learning or to inspire the ones who are learning to learn even more.

Conditions are apt to be worst of all in schools — urban schools, schools in the rural south and so on — that have large proportions of minority students. These are schools that usually have very poor facilities, very low salaries, even worse working conditions. Getting capable people to work in them is going to be a particularly big problem.

If I could do only one thing to change working conditions (if I were tsarina of these matters), I would mandate that all administrators should teach. Once they experienced some of those working conditions, they might be more willing to face up to the difficulties.

Lightfoot • I think that one reason autonomy begins to be distorted into feelings of isolation is that adults in schools have very little opportunity to get together to talk about educational issues, about matters pertaining to the intellectual lives of students and teachers. There needs to be more time in the school day for teachers to be with peers, time teachers could use to revitalize mind and spirit.

Sykes • There's so much commentary about teacher isolation, and so much research showing that teachers really need to interact with other teachers. But there's going to be a lot of resistance to that in schools, from teachers who say, "*Our* autonomy is constrained. But at least I have autonomy in my own classroom." Teachers will not appreciate the benefits of working with other teachers unless that sort of thing is implemented sensitively.

Gifford • A restructured teaching profession is also going to require restructuring the instructional setting.

Right now we have a system that puts 35 students in a classroom, on the average, all the time — no matter what the subject or the activity. But if we could restructure high schools so that we have large classes, when appropriate, we could have smaller classes, when

appropriate, without requesting a great deal of new money. I am convinced there is sufficient slack in schools and in the way we organize instruction to create opportunities for smaller classes.

I've talked to a number of teachers about this, asking them if they could plan their modes of instruction to take advantage of small classes and maximize their effectiveness in large classes. To a person they said yes, they could, in fact, structure such a program.

One obstacle, of course, is "class size maximums," which are a staple in every contract. But probably the major obstacle is inertia. No one is willing to be very, very brave when it comes to restructuring the school day. The Carnegie Unit — five classes a week, 50 minutes a class, instruction provided in neat packets — is so powerful in education that getting around it is almost impossible.

Timpane • If teachers begin to play stronger roles, venturing into what have so far been administrative and supervisory precincts, one consequence could be to put tremendous and perhaps unbearable pressure on local school administration and school boards. That means that professional development becomes as imperative for administrators and school board members as it is for anybody else.

One big worry is that school boards won't have any idea how to handle expanding the role of teachers and teaching in the context of collective bargaining. I think most teachers would say that school boards and administrators have become so preoccupied with the collective bargaining aspects of the relationship that those groups are apt to interpret the professional development concerns of teachers as a power grab. Relationships are now adversarial at so many levels and so much stylized, ritualized behavior is built into them that creating new structures will in some respects be quite difficult.

Sykes • To empower teachers, to give them new responsibilities for which they have no training and perhaps no inclination, is enormously difficult. It so thoroughly breaks with precedent.

Nonetheless, I think that teachers are going to have to be more thoroughly involved in running schools. I say this not out of any ideological conviction but because of manpower considerations. Nobody else can do it. The only way to go is to vest more authority in teachers.

Sizer • Until we improve the conditions for learning — the conditions, therefore, for teaching — we are not going to have significant school reform. To do that, at a price the public is willing to pay, is very difficult. It will require lots of trial and error, and the minds and energy of the most experienced people in the state. A wise state finds those people and backs them.

POSSIBILITY 3 • MAKE TEACHING MORE LIKE A PROFESSION

The analogy between teaching and the sovereign professions like medicine and law is inexact. Nonetheless, that analogy has been the source of some potentially valuable new thoughts about teaching. Looked at in the light of that analogy, current systems for testing teachers are inappropriate at best, say the experts, and at worst counterproductive. Different systems serving more ambitious purposes could, however, prove very useful to improving teaching.

Ravitch • Teaching is not now a profession. I would say that, were we to define it realistically, it is probably a civil service job.

Lightfoot • I think teaching is what one of my colleagues has called a "minor profession." Or it may be a "semiprofession." In any event, it's clear that people in our society and teachers themselves don't think of it as a profession with a capital "P." But, given the profound importance of the task teachers have ahead of them — which is, in fact, educating the next generation — teaching deserves to be perceived as a profession. By profession I don't mean a closed circle to which elitism or arrogance attaches, but rather some level of autonomy, some level of choice, some level of deciding on the context within which one will work.

The fatter the book of regulations, the harder it is for people not only to be perceived as professionals but also to feel committed in the way one would expect professionals to feel committed.

Darling-Hammond • Teaching lost a lot of ground in the 1970s. Salaries fell, prestige fell, working conditions were viewed as being worse (although, objectively, they may have been better in many regards), and teachers became more dissatisfied. Teaching has become vocationalized instead of professionalized.

(In 1972, about three-fourths of the high school seniors who planned to go into teaching were completing a college preparatory academic curriculum. By 1980, more than half the seniors planning to be teachers were in the vocational and general education tracks. These seniors were much less well prepared in academic areas, and they seemed to have the notion that teaching doesn't require an academic orientation. Teaching was competing with vocations for students rather than with professions.)

One sociologist of the professions has said that the key thing about the restructuring of society as a whole in the 20th century has been the professionalization of work. What professionalization really means is a process whereby members of an occupation define who is in the occupation and what the standards of practice will be. In return for insuring the competence of its members in some fashion, a profession incurs less state regulation.

But most current state policies on teaching concentrate on heavier regulation of membership (of entry into teaching and continuation in teaching) and heavier regulation of the act of teaching (more standardized approaches to curriculum, more use of testing as an outcome measure, and so on). All this ultimately undermines professionalism. To the extent that states constrain practice by defining it in standardized terms, they cannot hold members of an occupation accountable for appropriate practice but only for following standard operating procedures.

So I think that the challenge before us is how to move from a heavily regulated conception of education to a professional conception.

Sizer • Powerful people take jobs that entrust them with important things. If you want good people in the teaching profession, you have to set it up so teachers have authority over important things.

Darling-Hammond • There's a continual sort of struggle between the members of an occupation, who argue for professional autonomy and control, and members of the public, who argue for public safeguards — against rising costs, for example. Professionalization is not a static thing; it is found to differing extents in differing occupations. Take medicine, which is now struggling with some of the public-control issues that have become very familiar in teaching. Although medicine probably professionalized sooner and to a greater extent than most other occupations, doctors now operate increasingly in publicly funded enterprises (many third-party payments come from the public sector, much insurance is government funded, hospitals receive public funds, and so on). Now brewing are attempts at governmental control over treatment, the definition of treatment, the definition of proper payment and other matters. One response has been increasing amounts of peer review. Another — a fascinating development — has been the formation of doctors' unions, in health maintenance organizations and group practices, for example. Doctors are adopting a strategy teachers adopted 30 years ago.

That teaching is predominantly a public sector activity does make it different. Teachers need to be accountable in some sense to the public because their activities are publicly funded; we have lay boards of education whose notions of their roles have expanded over the course of the 20th century. But teaching does resemble some of the other public service occupations. Like social workers and judges, for example, teachers face what Michael Lipsky has called the "dual accountability" dilemma. On the one hand, they must exercise a fair amount of discretion in meeting the individual needs of clients, and they are accountable to clients for meeting those needs. On the other hand, they're accountable to the bureaucracy that sits above them for following standardized prescriptions for practice that are intended to insure equity and uniformity in service delivery. Resolving the dilemma is difficult, because if one pays attention solely to bureaucratic requirements, one almost of necessity is less effective in meeting a client's needs.

Professionalism can also be defined by the nature of the work performed. Some kinds of work require very little discretion or judgment and do not presuppose a large body of knowledge and the ability to apply it in nonroutine situations. A worker on an assembly line with few skills can presumably follow standard operating procedures to do a perfectly adequate job. But the work of a teacher in a classroom demands judgment and discretion.

Based on the nature of the work, I argue, as do many other people, that teaching demands a professional work structure. The components?

- Rigorous education and training so teachers can learn a body of knowledge and professional judgment in its application
- A mechanism for determining who possesses that knowledge and judgment — a certification requirement different from what we generally have today

Once membership in the profession has become somewhat selective in these terms, you can allow teachers the kind of autonomy they need to do their work well. You need not then create prescriptive policies to prevent incompetence. That, in turn, would allow a working environment that gives teachers considerably more individual and collective control over educational decisions and standards of professional practice.

How to do all this in a public sector occupation is the main challenge ahead. We can learn a great deal from looking at other professions. But there are no pat answers.

Tucker • The most effective organizations and the most effective schools are ones in which the people involved have a lot to say about the organization. (This is particularly true of organizations in which the commodity of exchange is ideas.) So, when you look closely at the kind of teaching we need, it turns out to have the characteristics exhibited by very well educated people who function as professionals. That's why I'm interested in "teaching as a profession." It really has to do, at bottom, with producing the kind of education we want for kids and with what we know about effective organizations.

Am I interested in having teaching become a profession because that is, *a priori*, a good thing? No. Making teaching into a profession is an instrumental good, not a good in itself. The only way to provide the quality of education kids need is to bring into teaching and keep in teaching the sorts of people who are attracted by the best professional opportunities our society has to offer. For education to get its fair share of those people, it has to compete on equal terms with the other opportunities open to them.

Ravitch • We don't really have any experience in creating a profession out of a civil service job. No one can say with any certainty what's going to work, because we haven't really tried.

Some of what the states have done so far seems awfully piecemeal; some of it seems to be leaning too hard on regulation and prescription. But there are possibilities for going in the right direction because of what we know about professions in general.

Gifford • My notion of a restructured profession is one in which entry could be less regulated and progression through the ranks more regulated. The analogue I use is the military. The military, which is characterized at its lower steps by marked turnover, is very similar to teaching. What does the military do? It concentrates pay, support and

prestige on the noncommmissioned officers who rise through the ranks. That is, it really nurtures the sergeants, the master sergeants, the lieutenants, the platoon captains. My problem with the idea of heavily regulating entry into teaching is that regulation is somewhat negative. If you regulate a second-rate group of people, your regulations end up being defensive, tempered by the need to deal with people who, as a group, are not all that good.

I would like to be positive. I say, "Allocate support — salaries, sabbaticals and other professional opportunities — on the basis of ability to demonstrate certain kinds of skills." I would probably push tenure back five years; I would make it relatively easy to enter teaching but impossible to advance without real ability and merit.

What's Bad About Testing Teachers? What Could Be Good?

Darling-Hammond • To the extent that we allow the kinds of tests now available to stand in lieu of real professional testing, we help perpetuate the low status of teaching. Taking a "basic skills" test is not something college students have to do in any other major. The message that sort of test sends is, "We're not really sure that you can read or write." That's not at all the same as saying, "We would like to ascertain whether you have acquired a body of professional knowledge and are able to apply that knowledge in a professionally appropriate way." Not at all.

Even the "tests of professional knowledge" some states use are not like the tests used in other professions. The National Teachers' Examination, for example, is a multiple-choice test, even though, I would argue, that format is inappropriate to assess people whose job requires them to make complex, nonroutine decisions. Questions on the NTE test generally give a single-sentence scenario: "If X has happened in your class, would you do A, B, C, D or E?" In virtually every instance, a skilled teacher would have to say, "Well, that depends — on this, that, the other and the other." Forcing teachers to make unreasonably limited choices is bad enough. What's worse is that, to the extent tests like that drive school of education curricula, we are encouraging a type of training even more reflexive and less thoughtful than the training we already have.

Testing of the proper sort could be one of the accoutrements of a profession. Testing of the sort now prevalent may be sufficient to satisfy the public that "standards" are in place. But I don't think it will go very far to raise professional standards. Yet that is what teaching needs in the long run.

Tucker • If we were to have tests that corresponded to the rhetoric we're using about the kinds of schools we want, we would have tests that ask people to diagnose the difficult problems that kids present to teachers every day in the classroom. We'd be asking for demonstrations of conceptual mastery and of ability to apply understanding of subject matter to novel problems. Please note that I'm using the word "test" to mean any means of assessment that's appropriate — not necessarily paper-and-pencil and certainly not multiple-choice examinations but, more generally, fair, reasonable and accurate assessment of the capacity to function the way we want teachers to function.

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Gifford • I like what's happening with testing only to the extent that interest in testing is forcing people to take a look at existing examinations. If this interest wakes us up to the fact that many of the examinations now in use aren't worth the powder to blow them to bits, I'd be very happy. I want to see testing move beyond where it is now. Right now we're in the business of testing for minimum competence, using standardized tests that are inappropriate.

I think a solid test that really tests capacity to teach, say, physics, is fine. If 90% pass it, wonderful. If 10% pass, then you know you've got a problem. But let's make sure the pass/fail rate isn't simply the result of the bell-shaped distribution curve.

Tucker • The tests we are using are screening out unacceptably large numbers of people from minority backgrounds. The proportion of minority kids in schools is going to increase steadily, and it is important to have teachers who can empathize with those kids and provide them role models. Simply putting screens in place to keep people out is unacceptable. We have got to find creative ways to enlarge the pool of capable minority kids very early on and then attract those kids into teaching. Although that's going to take an enormous effort, I've so far seen only little glimmers of interest in a few states.

Gifford • The falloff of interest in teaching among the minority youngsters is even greater than it is among white youngsters. It's an eminently rational decision, in the sense that it's a response to new opportunities. But somehow we're going to have to try to speak to the instinct, which many minority youngsters still possess, of being useful.

Graham • I would not object to some form of entry-level testing for teachers. (Up until about 1920 or 1930, this type of test was common.) But having a test will force us to recognize the abysmal job we educators are doing with the many minority college students who currently are not passing such tests. Educational institutions have done a bad job, that is. They perpetuate a system that has not helped a group that has always been discriminated against educationally. We would prefer to ignore the reality that minority students are much more likely than students in general to attend low-cost institutions that have not had the resources to invest in faculty, research or services to students.

Porter • I do not think that people who lack the skills and the knowledge to teach should teach. But I also don't think a sorting mechanism like a test is going to solve that problem. Sorting and remedies have to go hand in hand.

Darling-Hammond • One good approach might be to separate "licensure" from "certification." When a state grants a license, it shows it thinks a person in an occupation will not do harm. Certification is the process by which members of a profession define who is likely to be good at the work. Most of the tests for basic skills now used for teacher certification are really more compatible with licensure — with trying to establish which people will not perpetrate harm. These tests are far less useful for certifying who will be a good teacher — actually contribute to the public good. To base certification on tests best suited for licensure is to promulgate, I think, an unprofessional notion of teaching.

Schlechty • The tendency to make rules for the worst possible case creates conditions in which pursuing excellence is very difficult.

Darling-Hammond • A lot of people are now talking about having boards of teachers certify teachers as one way to move certification into the hands of the profession and to separate it from licensure. I think that idea ought to be explored. Al Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers has put forward the notion of a national teachers' exam. I think we should decide whether passing such an exam should determine admission into teaching or serve as a stamp of professional approval.

Shulman • The notion of a professional standards board need not mean that a single set of standards gets applied monolithically in every state or in every district, but, rather, that states and districts have a much better basis for defining and applying local standards than they have now. There is a national board exam in architecture, for example. But states set their own cutoff scores and add subsections that address their special needs. Having the national board to draw on strengthens quality control in architecture; it does not centralize quality control in an inappropriate way.

Timpane • I think that figuring out how to test teachers, in some way we haven't altogether figured out already, is highly important to the future of teaching. Testing is an issue that brings out every other issue.

A successful testing system would have a very big payoff for everybody. If in 5 or 10 years there were — through an interstate compact, a national test or whatever — a widely accepted test that the teachers and the public and the licensing authorities all believed was legitimate, I think we would all be a lot better off.

We can't underestimate the power of money, and I think that salaries are key. But I don't think money is the only thing. When teachers go around talking about it, the talk is often a screen for some other kinds of things that don't feel good about their work.

• Sara Lightfoot

MONEY ISN'T THE ONLY THING • IV

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The power of the purse. The experts talk about it as an unavoidable, practical consideration. What's surprising, however, is how little "More money!" figures in their assessment of how states now need to support education reform.

Pay is not the heart of the matter. "Listen to the good teachers," advises Theodore Sizer. "They talk about pay, yes. But they talk more passionately about the fact that other people are telling them what to do. I would say the heart of the matter is substantial control over time and materials; pay follows that."

Lightfoot • Although money isn't the only thing, the combination of low salaries and low status is deadening. Disentangling status and pay is very hard in a materialistic society: if teachers were paid more money, they would have higher status. Getting higher status with less money is very hard.

Ravitch • I think a combination of increasing salaries and incentives at the same time as raising standards offers some hope that the supply of teachers won't dry up altogether. We can't ask people to live on just their missionary spirit. We have to appeal to their missionary spirit and at the same time reward them enough that, even though they don't earn as much as they would in private industry, they don't starve.

Sykes • You can't start getting fancy on a weak foundation. Talking about fancy schemes when basic salaries are too low or class sizes are enormous just doesn't make sense. If you choose to ignore the things that build a better base — starting and continuing salaries, class sizes, instructional materials — I think the obvious conclusion is that you're just kidding yourself. Yet those are all things that are enormously expensive.

Timpane • Although better pay is absolutely necessary, there's a level at which it interacts with other things that have to happen. At some point, the possibilities for better pay are going to start depending on convincing the public that the teaching profession has changed. If we haven't made some progress on some other issues in the next three to five years, we'll see the end of the better pay issue, I think.

Boyer • Relative to raising teachers' salaries, the cost of all the other sorts of things we need to do in Phase Two is postage money. ••

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It's a big country. But I'm amazed at the way ideas that are authentic tend to multiply.

• *Ernest Boyer*

IDEAS • V

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Grouped here are suggestions for state leaders to consider about how to give talented teachers extra leverage.

Try them. Discard them. Adapt them. The test of their authenticity rests, of course, on how usefully they contribute to strong, effective state education policy.

A note of caution. To use these suggestions as a shopping list would be to produce the sort of piecemeal policy that the experts say won't work. More practical would be to "look at the thing whole," as Diane Ravitch puts it, assessing how well a particular idea meshes with overall policy.

A note of hope. Beneath the diversity of the experts' analyses of the condition of teaching and their suggestions for improving teaching lies consensus. In general terms, they agree. What next for education? As Ted Sizer puts it, "There should be deregulation of means and a clearer emphasis on unequivocal ends." For all the reasons they give, that could prove to be sound advice.

"In the end," says Ernest Boyer, "human institutions are renewed by concentrating on what's going right, on what succeeds. And so it is with schools."

Shift Point of View

- ***Spend more time on incentives than on regulations.***

(Lieberman)

- ***Take an intermediate-term risk for the sake of long-term gain.***

We've got to be prepared to give more autonomy, improve conditions, invest money in the hopes of getting the right kind of people under the right kind of conditions to be able to do what we now claim they can't do, which is why we haven't given a chance to do it. (Shulman)

- ***Base policy on a positive image of excellence.***

Under most conditions, people are motivated more by nightmares than by dreams, in part because nightmares are so much more vivid. I think regulations are motivated by the nightmare of chaos, license, of disarray. We have to think about what it would take to develop an enticing image of creative, inventive, exciting education that is as vivid as the nightmares are now. (Shulman)

- ***Do not let schools minimize their responsibility to make everyone truly literate.***

Rigorous intellectual achievement must come first; that's what school is for, in my view. A particular danger is that we have had that kind of view only for some of the children of the well-to-do and not for the children of the poor. We have thought it appropriate for children of the rich to have the very best education. Well, I think the children of the poor need that education even more than the children of the rich. If the schools fail the children of the rich, their families have other resources; if the schools fail the children of the poor, those children don't have other institutions to which to turn. Lawyers, bankers, university presidents don't want their children taking "life skills"; they want them to learn history, mathematics, English and so on. The children of the poor need those skills even more than children of the rich.

When I say the school's first responsibility is to provide a rigorous academic program, I mean a program that has standards and that is accessible to students of varying levels of achievement. (Graham)

- ***Make central decisions about the goals of education.***

Elementary school teachers, for example, are generally not eager to take personal responsibility for the content of mathematics instruction. I, myself, see content as a political issue more than a matter for experts to decide. Teachers may feel a greater commitment to the "how" of teaching than to the "what," yet many state educational programs have been attempts to influence the "how."

As far as content is concerned, there are lots of important roles for states to play. A state could, for example, let districts know when the science curriculum in elementary schools isn't what it ought to be. A state could analyze the strengths and weaknesses of available instructional materials. Since maybe one of the reasons science isn't taught is because science isn't tested, a state could set up an optional testing program. Or a state could review what prospective teachers learn about science. (Porter)

- ***Consider the possibility of policy "packages."***

Some kinds of reform can't be done the same way at the same time everywhere. So, set up review boards (that include teachers and citizens but are perhaps dominated by law makers) to define a universe of acceptable alternatives with some precision. Then say to school districts, "Treat what we're suggesting as the world's largest Chinese menu and transform it into a banquet. Show us how you are going to put it together. If what you propose falls within our guidelines, we will work together to help you be accountable for the success of your banquet." (Shulman)

- ***Operate from faith rather than from doubt.***

Some states and some districts have long histories of tension and confrontation, and there is always the risk that school reform could be trivialized around the points of contention. My own sense is that intimidating ourselves into immobility and running scared is not what leadership's about. (Boyer)

EXPERIMENT

- ***Give people who want to experiment room and time.***

It's pretty hard, I would think, for a policy maker — even one who has made his reputation sponsoring new regulations — to argue against responsible people trying to get to the same place by a different road. (Sizer)

- ***Sponsor local initiatives.***

Real reform threatens vested interests. It requires a fundamental realignment of power, authority, rules, roles, relationships. So the real trick is to create incentives for various constituencies to support change. To me, the only reasonable way to do that is to sponsor some sophisticated local initiatives that can bring about realignments without risking the whole ball game all over the state. (Schlechty)

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• ***Once you get a lot of experiments going, study what's happening.***

Let's say a state lets 25 districts develop career-ladder plans and supplies the resources for that. Five districts are apt to come up with something pretty consequential. The point would be to study what the 5 districts produced and how, then begin to diffuse the good things laterally to the other 20 districts. (Sykes)

• ***Try out new things in some places where they look hard to do.***

Paint portraits of the possible. Try to dissuade people from saying immediately, "Well, it's only working because you did it under unusual circumstances." (Shulman)

• ***Let unexpected things wheel up from unexpected places.***

I think there is no doubt at all that in some states, some particularly courageous, far-sighted people will make very important advances in restructuring arrangements for education. Some will work out well, and some will not. But my own view is that this country's success is in no small measure the result of its ability to carry out one revolution after another in social arrangements. People continue to have the capacity to say, "This isn't working. We ought to try something else." We've already seen ideas of what's possible at the local level that have captured the imagination of governors and others at the state level. (Tucker)

• ***Don't equate differences with deficiencies.***

The differences in competency among teachers ought to be exploited for good purposes, not used simply to flagellate teachers an lower their standing in the larger community. (Gifford)

• ***Realize that mutual interest may not be identity of interest; take advantage of fluidity.***

We have reached one of those Brandeisian moments when the states can really be "laboratories of democracy." I think that at this point incentives for new coalitions and new programs featuring new configurations of interested parties would stimulate good new ideas. (Timpane)

• ***Keep in touch with other states.***

States are going to need to feel confident, both programmatically and politically, that they are not out on limbs. One of the best ways to do that, I think, is to remain in touch with each other on education issues. Then states can go forward at their own pace, yet feel part of where the nation is heading. (Timpane)

Try Novel Approaches

• ***Establish serious professional development programs that compel teachers to take courses that enrich their abilities as teachers.***

One of the things that used to irk me when I was in the New York City Public Schools was the "Master's degree plus 30 credits" requirement, since the 30 credits were usually taken in what I call the educational equivalent of basket weaving. I would like for educational authorities to be able to say what kinds of further courses teachers should take, though the choice should also be a function of a teacher's own aspirations. I think authorities in Newark, New Jersey, ought to be able to say to a teacher who wants to pick up salary credit, "You ought to take some courses in language development among minority students, especially the intersection of culture and language acquisition." Someone in Los Angeles might want to say, "Because we have such large numbers of Asian and Hispanic students, you ought to take some courses in a second language." Here is where I would argue that imposing regulation is appropriate. (Gifford)

• ***Make loans available to experienced teachers who decide to go back to school.***

I think it's good to train teachers enough to start them out, then let them teach for two or three years, and *then* help them go back to school. I feel strongly that most people do not begin to get interesting as teachers, to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, until they've been teaching for two or three years. That's the time for them to go back for more study. (Graham)

• ***Let teachers leave and re-enter teaching.***

Teaching well is such extraordinarily difficult work that I think people need to be able to go away from it to regenerate, and then come back. Sabbatical policies or time-of-leave policies that assure teachers the possibility of return — and perhaps expect something particular of them upon return — might be a useful approach. (Lightfoot)

• ***Build opportunities for teacher renewal into the school calendar.***

Teachers need more time to prepare. If in the end we want teachers to be engaged and their ideas to be freed, this has to happen in every school. It has to mean more than giving teachers a day off to hear some dreary lecture. I think states should have summer fellowships for teachers and teacher scholar programs, for example. How about creating a state academy for outstanding teachers who could maybe move from school to school holding seminars? Or setting up exchange programs that let some teachers spend time helping out in different school districts?

Programs like this won't touch every teacher. But every teacher will know the intent is not just to regulate but also to renew. (Boyer)

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• ***Give schools discretionary funds for teachers to use.***

Every school should have a teacher excellence fund, for example; every school should have a teacher travel fund. If there aren't funds like this in every school, there could at least be statewide competitive funds. (Boyer)

• ***Create something like a "quality index" that lets the public know about the kinds of things that materially affect the quality of education.***

Let's start building an information base — using more than just test scores, which are far too easy to discount. I think the public should know about the extent of teacher misassignment, about huge class sizes, about lousy instructional materials or how many kids don't even have textbooks, about inadequate supplies of substitute teachers, about low morale, about high rates of staff turnover.

Let's look at school process factors and then, where schools don't measure up, intervene in a fairly tough-minded way. (Sykes)

• ***Rethink "accountability."***

Learning is a mysterious process, in the sense that it is determined by what's inside a person as well as what's outside and it proceeds at various rates at various times. That a particular child cannot read by the end of the 2nd grade doesn't mean he may not catch up. But if all the children in an East Harlem school can't read by the end of 2nd grade, that's quite another matter. Maybe a good way to look at accountability would be to look at it broadly, to hold schools accountable for some level of success rather than individual teachers. Accountability to colleagues could have far greater weight for teachers than accountability to a broad community that remains relatively faceless. (Lightfoot)

• ***Create professional boards to set the standards for certification and practice.***

Rather than trying to legislate those standards directly, delegate that responsibility to boards patterned on boards found in other professions. Where boards already exist, they have relatively minor responsibility, so I would suggest strengthening their authority. (Darling-Hammond)

• ***Develop new assessment procedures that direct the work of schools to higher-order thinking.***

I think there's a real mismatch between what we now test for and what we say we want the schools to attempt. The type of testing used now prevents a concerted effort to teach students to reason, think critically, solve problems. Yet testing is a powerful lever for policy makers — and it is far more amenable to technical advances than hard-to-pin-down matters of school climate or relationships between teachers or administrators. (Sykes)

• ***Set up centers for teachers and for principals where people who are good at their work can learn from each other.***

I favor a grassroots strategy based on the assumption that principals and teachers have real expertise to share. We've seen too much assuming that researchers should cull the literature for the eight key points and then tell everyone else what to do. (Sykes)

• ***Organize statewide or regional education study councils.***

We need leadership forums in which teachers' organizations, administrators, legislators and representatives of governors' offices all come together to talk about education. The groups probably need to be fairly small and meet on a fairly regular basis. The idea is to foment dialogue about the meaning of public education and the problems in public education; the result would probably be to keep the education reform movement alive. (Schlechty)

• ***Officially recognize great teaching.***

Leaders need to say that teaching matters, in some personal ways that touch everybody. Maybe governors could hold an annual ceremony to honor four great teachers, or prominent citizens of a state could remember a great teacher. The point is to recognize as well as regulate. Though people may be grumpy about education in general, they can all get very caught up in a teacher. (Boyer)

Consider New Financial Arrangements

• ***Enlarge the difference between minimum and maximum salaries and stretch out the time it takes to reach the maximum.***

If, say, the maximum salary were three times the minimum and it took longer to reach that maximum, people might be more apt to consider teaching a career in which they can earn a reasonably good salary. (Ravitch)

• ***Invest less in training people who are not really committed to teaching, and more in people who demonstrate solid commitment.***

You might keep everyone on the same salary schedule for, say, the first five years of teaching. Thereafter, the teachers who — to go back to the analogue of the military — are satisfied with being just grunts, the equivalent of infantry, would stay on that schedule. But teachers who are prepared to take on leadership responsibilities, to work with new teachers, and so on, would be on an accelerated track. What I'm suggesting is a salary schedule that takes more into account that just straight education credits. (Gifford)

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• ***Set up "change-oriented endowments" that supply schools with a rough equivalent of venture capital.***

Suppose a legislature said, "Each year we will put a dollar per student in an endowment account in each school, the interest from which can be used as venture capital to develop new programs of broadly specified sorts." Setting up something like that would give schools some flexibility and enhance their long-term planning capacity. (Schlechty)

• ***Return to districts some capacity to tax themselves more highly.***

There is no way for schools to solve resource-related problems when all the money for education is controlled in Sacramento. I don't get the feeling that people in California, for example, tax themselves too highly. I hear a lot of pious testimony, but I don't see this nation having made any sacrifices to speak of to support education. (Shulman)

EVALUATE

• ***Let people know what you expect by what you inspect.***

In my opinion, evaluation, properly understood, is the most powerful device in reform.

We can talk about expectations all over the place. But until people see what you inspect, they don't know what you care about. Right now, people know that state agencies care about how forms are filled out, because that's what they inspect. So what they get is good form-filler-outers.

States need to give much more attention to evaluation and much less attention to program development. They ought to turn program development over to local units. But they also ought to spend a lot of time assessing, analyzing and providing information about how things are going out in the schools.

Remember that numbers simply indicate where a problem might be. They don't tell what the problem is. Here's where state agencies could be very useful — helping schools get numbers and then helping them get under the numbers. (Schlechty)

• ***Put a "little spotlight" on what looks promising, but don't draw premature conclusions.***

The report prepared by the California Tax Association for the California Roundtable on the results of SBA 13 is an interesting example, because it sets up some reasonable expectations. It says something like, "Well, one of six things is a bomb. But the other five are being reasonably well implemented in the following respects." There was an understanding that batting five out of six puts you way ahead in the reform game. (Timpane)

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• ***Have a learning view.***

I think it's good for state people to realize that they can learn from their mistakes — plan to do something but then look at the results of that something critically, building on its strengths and getting rid of what's no good. (Lieberman)

Be Patient

If educated, concerned legislators could get over their impatience and need for short, quick answers. . . . The solidity of mind it takes to formulate effective educational policy requires a person to sit down and ponder some of the problems. And to understand that when someone says an issue is complex, that doesn't mean it's overwhelming. (Schlechty)

It takes time to really do anything different. You've got to give people time. (Lieberman)

Go See for Yourself

One of the best ways to give legislators or their aides a sense of what reality is would be to let them spend a day as a classroom teacher. Then they would get a first-hand idea of what it's like to deal with a variety of children — without an office or a secretary or time to correct five classes' worth of homework a day while preparing five sets of inspirational plans for the following day. (Graham)

If legislators got out more, they could see for themselves what's possible. I think they'd get more confidence in teachers and teaching. They'd get some visions of the future. (Lieberman)

Think About Teachers. Not About the Profession in the Abstract

Whenever I talk about teaching, I talk about two or three teachers I've had. I personalize it, so that people get to thinking, "Yeah, I remember a teacher who changed my life." That's what it's all about: identifying and sustaining that kind of teacher. (Boyer)

What education needs most, say the experts — at the moment and for the years to come — are leaders with a clear vision of education, leaders who care about education more than superficially, optimistic leaders.

Schlechty • We haven't had a clear image of what education is about. But that's what we need. We don't need "visionaries." But we do need people with a clear vision in positions of leadership. People with some questions to ask because they've got that vision.

Gifford • I'd like to think that every politician has two agendas. One agenda responds to the public's perception of what is important. But I would hope that every person in public life also has a higher agenda — a moral agenda or a personal agenda. Education is going to have to become part of that personal agenda.

Boyer • Putting new priorities in place will take time. But I'm not despondent. The sun is shining, people are still thinking and doing. Now, it seems to me, we have to keep nudging and nudging toward a larger vision.

ROLL CALL

THE EXPERTS WHO WERE INTERVIEWED FOR THIS PUBLICATION

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What Next? More Leverage for Teachers ***is part of a major, multiyear initiative launched by the Education Commission of the States in 1985.***

The purpose of the initiative is to help state policy makers draw on the energy and enthusiasm of teachers, to make teachers partners in reform. Through documents like this one, through research, through meetings of teachers and meetings of teachers with policy makers and through various other activities, the Education Commission of the States is seeking to make it clear that good teaching is central to reform. Support for the initiative has come not only from the Education Commission but also from the Carnegie Corporation, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. and the Matsushita Foundation.

In the words of Governor Thomas H. Kean of New Jersey, 1985–86 chair of the Education Commission, "Something is about to happen to teaching in America. A renaissance is possible."

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